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DOWN TO EARTH TIPS FOR THE 1946 GARDEN

In the spring, the farm family thinks of gardening time, again. The location of this garden is important --- as close to the kitchen as good soil conditions and space will allow. The result will be: steps saved, more vegetables used in meal planning, and better weed control in those odd moments while the "tea-kettle boils", or the meat is cooking.

Before planning and planting your garden:

1. Read the seed catalogs
2. Send for more than one catalog -- there is good information in each
3. Study the varieties most suitable for your locality -- and the how's and why's of planting.

The good gardener is already prepared for a full season. The new gardener generally likes some help with ideas. And a few need more encouragement to do a good job this year.

Begin early -- plant peas, lettuce, onions and radishes. Then, you'll be ready to enjoy some good salads with your meals as the summer days approach. So, possibly you would like this recipe for SALAD DRESSING!

Cooked SALAD DRESSING

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt	1 egg or 2 egg yolks,
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon mustard	slightly beaten
$\frac{2}{3}$ tablespoon sugar	2 tablespoons butter, or
Few grains cayenne	substitute
2 tablespoons flour	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar	

Mix dry ingredients. Add egg, butter, milk and vinegar, very slowly. Stir and cook over boiling water until mixture begins to thicken. Strain and cool.

NOTE: 1. More mustard may be used to suit the family taste.
2. Beat vigorously with rotary beater if mixture shows tendency to "separate" or curdle.

This year, be different! Try some vegetable which you may have never planted before. Peas, corn, beans and tomatoes are the good old stand-bys --- and be sure you plant enough for eating this summer, and canning, too --- but why not plan to lengthen the period of garden productivity?

Tomatoes, canned as a vegetable, or puréed (rubbed through a sieve) for juice, taste so good next winter. For variety, why not try a few OKRA plants this summer. When tomatoes, onions and peppers are ripe, the green okra pods will be ready for cutting too. Then, you're ready to make CREOLE SAUCE -- so easy and so delicious -- you'll wonder why you never thought of it before.

CREOLE SAUCE: Gather as many tomatoes as your large kettle will hold --- after they have been peeled and cut into quarters. Before placing the tomatoes in the kettle, do this: gather as many okra pods as may be tender and ripe that day, probably about 6 to 10 pods (don't use any that are tough). Wash pods, cut off stem end, then slice okra into large cooking kettle; add 2 or 3 onions, and 2 or 3 green peppers, finely chopped (quickest way - put through food chopper). Cook with a little water for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, then add peeled and quartered tomatoes. Continue cooking for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until mixture has consistency of sauce. Can in hot, sterile jars according to the open kettle method.

Next winter, use this CREOLE SAUCE for a soup base or filler, or with rice, macaroni or spaghetti for a main dish or thickened as a sauce for omelettes or meat loaf.

Lettuce is the cool weather salad green --- so, you'll want an early spring planting, then plant again in August for fall salads.

Or, Chinese cabbage! Start the seed not earlier than the middle of July --- thin the plants to 12 to 15 inches apart. In September, prepare yourself for a treat. In this locality, Wong Bok, the dwarf variety is best because it will not wilt if hot days arrive late in September. Serve it finely sliced as a salad, seasoned with onion, salt, pepper, a pinch of sugar (if it can be spared) and "dressed" with mayonnaise, French dressing (oil and vinegar) or your own home-made salad dressing.

Perhaps you have never tried Brussels Sprouts or Broccoli. These are started in July for best results. The "heads" of Broccoli and the Sprouts (little cabbages) are ready to serve in October and November --- right up to the day of almost zero weather. In cool weather, Broccoli forms large, firm, green heads, --- but be sure to cut and use each head before the yellow flowers appear.

Parsnips and salsify (vegetable oysters) extend this year's garden crops into next spring when they're at their best for flavor,

just before the garden is prepared for the next crop. Possibly you haven't been successful with parsnips. This year, try this: plant radishes and parsnips in the same row. Don't worry if you do not see parsnips at first, when the radishes are ready. Pull the radishes carefully, and some sunny day, you'll notice a fine-stemmed plant with a leafy growth, under-neath the radish foliage. That will be a parsnip (I hope)! When the radishes are finished, the parsnip plant will be strong enough to see the sunlight --- having received its start in the shade and moisture held by the radish plant. And, fried parsnips taste so good next spring!

For MORE eating pleasure on your farm, you may want to start permanent plantings of some of these; horseradish, rhubarb and asparagus. A few plants of each will make meal planning easier before the regular garden gets "under way", and the variety of flavor will be welcome in the spring of each year.

All good farmers like to "grow their own pork" --- so, why not the sage for seasoning the sausage, too? Sage is an herb - a woody-stemmed, perennial plant. Get a package of seed this year. Start a few plants, even three or four. The first year, the plant will have a few stems which can be cut, and the leaves dried for use in next winter's sausage, or the dressing for the Thanksgiving chicken or turkey. Possibly after the first year, during which time the plant gets a growth, you may want to transfer the sage plants to a permanent bed in one corner of the garden where it will not interfere with future plowing, or to a spot near the house.

LAST OF ALL --- let's not forget to have some flowers ---- even two or three kinds this year, if you are too busy for more. Plant them near the house. Maybe the children would like to be responsible for the flowers. A bouquet will brighten the rooms indoors, and the "blooming plants" will add "appearance" to the farm.

Best wishes for the best garden ever!!!!

Sincerely yours,

Marian F. Owen

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HM Supervisor

